

September 2018

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year! The three fifth grade teachers work collaboratively to ensure all fifth grade students have a positive and shared experience in their final year at Duniway. We are looking forward to an exciting and productive year working with you and your child.

As partners in your child's education, we strive to keep you informed about what's going on in the classroom as well as your child's academic and social progress. We communicate frequently through email. Please check your email regularly. Each day, students will take home their homework folder with daily assignments and school handouts. Students will receive a weekly calendar with most assignments already recorded. Students will record additional assignments. It is essential that students bring their homework folder back and forth each day.

We assign homework each day, Monday-Thursday, with the occasional weekend assignment. Additionally, students will have various long-term projects throughout the year. We expect students to do the actual work by themselves, unless the assignment states otherwise, **but parental guidance and support at this age is still very important!** Your child may need you to provide a structured atmosphere for completing assignments. They may need you to help them break homework time into segments with breaks in between. They may need you to help them to stay motivated and on task. Please expect, and praise, quality work and effort. Please check with your child on a daily basis regarding homework assignments. Homework is due the following day unless otherwise specified. If a student is absent due to medical reasons he/she will be given the same amount of days to complete the assignment upon return to school.

Reading Homework- Research shows that the more a student reads, the better reader, writer, communicator, and speller he/she will be. Students are to read **20-30 minutes each night, at least five nights a week**. Encourage your child to read a variety of genres. Occasionally, specific reading selections will be assigned.

Weekly Crossword Puzzle- Each week we assign a states-themed crossword puzzle. The goal of this activity is to help students hone their 'close' reading skills. Students are expected to read the content twice through. After the initial reading, students should read the clues and then refer back to the article to find the specific information needed. Students are exempt from their reading log on crossword puzzle homework days.

Math- Students will have weekly math assignments. The assignment will be due the next day unless noted. It will be reflective of what we are learning in the classroom or a review of previously learned concepts. In addition to these assignments, students **must continuously practice their multiplication and division facts at home**. We will have *Quick Fact* quizzes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our math is a spiraling curriculum and the more proficient a student is with his/her math facts, the easier it will be for them to decipher a problem as well as go deeper with making mathematical connections. **We cannot stress enough the importance of students knowing these facts fluently!**

Studying for Upcoming Quizzes is Homework: Students will have frequent quizzes, on various subjects throughout the year. These quiz dates will be recorded on the weekly calendar. Students will have study guides, word lists, practice sheets, and other useful tools to prepare for

quizzes. Studying for these quizzes is homework! There really is no such thing as a day with out homework in fifth grade.

Missing or Incomplete Work- Fifth grade students know that we expect quality work. If a student's homework is missing, sloppy, or incomplete, he or she will fill out a form explaining the reason why. If this happens frequently we will contact you to problem-solve the situation.

Snacks and Breaks- Students should have a water bottle in class every day. This allows students to stay hydrated without compromising the learning environment for themselves or others with frequent trips to the water dispensers. This also cuts down on the paper cups that our school consumes. We also encourage a **nutritious** snack. We firmly believe that students need active breaks throughout the day. We will (weather permitting) take short outdoor breaks every day in addition to lunch recess. Please encourage your child to wear the proper clothes to school for our ever-changing Oregon weather. Students must keep a pair of "slippers", with a sole that can be worn outside in case of emergency drills, here at school if they want to use the field on wet days.

The success of any classroom depends on an environment that is safe, stimulating and engineered for students to recognize and fulfill their potential. We strive to provide a positive and rewarding atmosphere in which students feel accepted for who they are and feel safe to take educational risks.

We encourage students to become self-managers and will help them learn the skill set to achieve this goal. We will acknowledge and celebrate positive behavior. We will explicitly teach classroom expectations and review these throughout the year. We have high expectations for each student and hold them accountable. In addition to following Duniway's and Portland Public Schools' behavior policies, students know that if their behavior detracts from their own or others' physical or emotional safety or quality learning experience, they will receive a verbal warning. After a warning, students will fill out a "Stop & Think" reflection sheet. This sheet may come home to a parent to sign. If problematic behavior persists, we will be in touch with the student's parent or guardian to set up a conference. Our goal is to help each student experience success in meeting these expectations!

We look forward to working with you and your child over the next year! Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have concerns, questions or just want to check-in.

Best regards,

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